

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application Number: 10/737,060

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Applicant(s): Thomas J. Dinger and Fernando Salazar

Entitled: CATEGORIZING AND SHARING LEARNING OBJECTS

Examiner: Kang Hu

Group Art Unit: 3714

Attorney Docket No.: LOT920030029US1 (7321-014U)

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner For Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Non-Final Official Action mailed May 31, 2007 (the "Non-Final Office Action"), please enter the following amendments in the above-referenced patent application (the "Patent Application"), and further please consider the following remarks establishing the patentability of the amended claims of the Patent Application.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 8 of this paper.

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the Abstract of the Invention with the following replacement Abstract of the Invention:

The present invention provides a method, system and computer program product for administering learning objects within a learning management system. In the invention, a learner can select various learning materials in the system, known as "learning objects", and can aggregate these learning objects in a special category or "learning folder" directly on the system. The learning folders can be separate from an existing course catalog of learning objects. Each learner can establish and delete learning folders, and can modify each learning folder by adding or removing learning objects to and from the folder. Finally, while each learning folder created by a user can at first only be accessed by the user, a user can allow other learners in the system to access the folder by establishing a "learning link" for the folder, which dictates which other learners can access the learning folder.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of administering learning objects within a learning management system, comprising the steps of:

establishing within a computing system a learning folder for a particular learner in the learning management system (LMS) which is separate from an existing course catalog of learning objects, the learning folder comprising a configuration to aggregate access to existing learning objects from a separate course catalog;

adding within the computing system one or more of the learning objects to the learning folder; and,

initially limiting access to the learning folder within the computing system to the particular learner.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

establishing a learning link for the learning folder, which provides access to the learning folder for one or more additional learners.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

modifying the learning folder by adding one or more additional learning objects to the learning folder.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

modifying the learning folder by removing one or more learning objects from the learning folder.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
modifying the learning link by adding access for one or more learners.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
modifying the learning link by removing access for one or more learners.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
removing a learning folder from the learning management system.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
removing a learning link from the learning management system.
9. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for administering learning objects within a learning management system, the computer program comprising a routine set of instructions which when executed by the machine cause the machine to perform the steps of:

establishing within the computing system a learning folder for a particular learner in the learning management system (LMS) which is separate from an existing course catalog of learning objects, the learning folder comprising a configuration to aggregate access to existing learning objects from a separate course catalog;

adding within the computing system one or more of the learning objects to the learning folder; and,

initially limiting access to the learning folder within the computing system to the particular learner.

10. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

establishing a learning link for the learning folder, which provides access to the learning folder for one or more additional learners.

11. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

modifying the learning folder by adding one or more additional learning objects to the learning folder.

12. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

modifying the learning folder by removing one or more learning objects from the learning folder.

13. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

modifying the learning link by adding access for one or more learners.

14. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

modifying the learning link by removing access for one or more learners.

15. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

removing a learning folder from the learning management system.

16. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 9, further causing said machine to perform the steps of:

removing a learning link from the learning management system.

17. (Currently Amended) A learning management system (LMS) comprising:

a plurality of learning objects disposed within a catalog in a computing system;

a plurality of learners configured to access the learning objects within the computing system; and,

a learning folder management user interface within the computing system through which particular ones of the learners can establish learning folders, each of the learning folders aggregating containing selected ones of the learning objects separate and apart from an existing course catalog of learning objects.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17, wherein the learning management user interface comprises a configuration for limiting access to each one of the established learning folders to the particular one of the learners who created the learning folder.

19. (Original) The learning management system of claim 18, wherein the learning management user interface further comprises a configuration for permitting access to selected ones of the established learning folders for others of the learners by way of corresponding learning links.

REMARKS

I. Overview

These remarks are set forth in response to the Non-Final Office Action mailed May 31, 2007. As this amendment has been timely filed within the three-month statutory period, neither an extension of time nor a fee is required. Presently, claims 1 through 19 are pending in the Patent Application. Claims 1, 9 and 17 are independent in nature. In the Non-Final Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the Abstract of the Invention as omitting claimed elements and for incorporating legal phraseology. Additionally, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-8 and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Finally, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,978,648 to George et al. (George). In response, the Applicants have amended claims 1, 9 and 17 to incorporate a computing system as suggested by the Examiner in paragraph 5 of the Non-Final Office Action. Yet further, the Applicants have amended the Abstract as requested by the Examiner in paragraphs 1 through 3 of the Non-Final Office Action. Finally, the Applicants have additionally amended claims 1, 9 and 17 to emphasize the that the learning folder includes a configuration to aggregate access to existing learning objects from a separate course catalog.

II. The Applicant's Invention

The Applicants have invented a method and system for finding, managing and sharing learning materials in a learning management system. In accordance with the principles of the Applicants' invention, a user of the learning management system, otherwise referred to as a "learner", can select from various learning materials in a learning management system, otherwise known as "learning objects." To be able to easily retrieve, manage, and share these materials, the

learner can aggregate selected learning objects into an ad-hoc category or "learning folder", which is established on the learning management system separately from an existing catalog of learning objects. The learner can further create and delete learning folders, and can add or remove learning objects to and from the folder. Even yet further, a user can allow other learners on the system to access the folder by establishing a "learning link" for the folder. Each learning link can then specify which other learners can access the learning folder.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

A. U.S. Patent No. 5,978,648 to George et al. (George)

George discloses an interactive multi media performance assessment system and process. The George system and process can be utilized by students in creating multi media presentations based upon the task assignments generated by a teacher utilizing different combinations of text, audio and visual input sources. In George, a series of work folders are created by the student to view the issued task assignments and provide a vehicle for creating the multi media presentations. Resources such as Internet based connection and various audio visual items may be utilized with the system for assisting in the creation of the presentations and both the teachers and students may provide feedback in the form of text, audio or video. Additionally, administrators can provide feedback to teachers which in turn can be utilized for evaluation and suggested improvements.

B. Amendments to the Claims

Applicants have amended claims 1, 9 and 17 to express the establishment within a computing system of a learning folder for a particular learner in the learning management system which is separate from an existing course catalog of learning objects. As amended, claims 1, 9

and 17 also require that the learning folder include a configuration to aggregate access to existing learning objects from a separate course catalog. Support for these amendments can be found in Figure 1 and paragraphs [0018] and [0019] of Applicants' published form of the originally filed patent application. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

C. Argument

Importantly, in paragraph 8 of the Non-Final Office Action, the Examiner has expressly equated the "work folder" to Applicants' "learning folder". As defined in George, a work folder is created by a student to store presentations and access assigned tasks. Specifically, as stated in George,

The student workfolders which are created using the task screen 142 and template screen 160 permit a student/user of the system and method of this invention to perform such tasks as create multi media presentations, access assigned performance tasks and projects including exemplars, rubrics, criteria and resources and to choose selected performance tasks for inclusion into a digitally created portfolio.

Thus, material created by either a student or teacher can be placed in a work folder.

By comparison, as explicitly stated in the amended claims 1, 9 and 17, a learning folder can establish within a computing system a learning folder for a particular learner in the learning management system which is separate from an existing course catalog of learning objects. Additionally, as expressly recited in the amended claims 1, 9 and 17, the learning folder can include a configuration to aggregate access to existing learning objects from a separate course catalog. In George, however, there is no aggregation of existing learning objects from a separate course catalog into a learning folder. Rather, in George presentations, tasks and projects are stored directly into the work folder and are not aggregations of presentations, tasks and projects available through a "separate course catalog".

IV. Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 101 and 102(b) owing to the canceled and amended claims and the foregoing remarks. The Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 31, 2007

/Steven M. Greenberg/

Steven M. Greenberg, Reg. No.: 44,725
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Carcy, Rodriguez, Greenberg & Paul, LLP
950 Peninsula Corporate Circle, Suite 3020
Boca Raton, Florida 33487
Customer No. 46321
Tel: (561) 922-3845
Fax: (561) 244-1062